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Your Miracle Power

Mayan Revelation Number 171

What Is This Faith?

Prayer

The Substance of Things Hoped For

The Evidence of Things Not Seen

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Beloved Centurion:

In this lecture lesson we are going to talk about FAITH. Faith is probably the most misunderstood subject there is - not so much misunderstanding, but rather a complete lack of understanding of what Faith is, and how to attain a spiritual enlightenment whereby faith comes easily.

Once we understand it and how to call upon it at will, once the act of believing becomes a habit, it is less difficult for us to accept the knowledge that no matter how impossible a problem may seem, there is a solution. This is true.

Until we really understand faith and how to put it to work in our lives, many of us find it practically impossible to put our affairs of life unreservedly in the hands of the Great One to whom all things are possible. Part of the time our faith is strong, and then comes doubt; even in the hearts of the most devout people there arises at times a crisis which is difficult to cope with, and even these "stronger-than-most" people find it a monumental task to keep their faith strong.

What a wonderful feeling it is when one learns to trust implicitly - such a great calm and peace enters the heart and soul of the recipient of implicit faith; and nothing but Christian faith insures that solidity to the future of a person which they must have if it is to be a bulwark against the cares and thoughts of this day in which we live.

In this lesson, you will be told all of the ways in which you can use faith, and what it can do for you. Read it carefully please, dear student and Companion; know what it says. IT CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE.

This whole series which we have called YOUR MIRACLE POWER can grow into a powerful force if it is used. It can cause you to wonder how you ever lived without its wonderful strength in your life and the lives of those about you. Do not use it just for awhile and then allow it to weaken. USE YOUR MIRACLE POWER, - understand it. Know that when it is used for good there is nothing impossible. Think deeply on the words of the following prayer as you go forward with your lesson:

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, lead my powers of comprehension
and understanding into the deep, true meanings
of faith. There let them contemplate it till
I know how to make it my own and use it in the
doing of thy will.

Amen.

THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR:

What is this wonderful thing we have been discussing, this miraculous thing called faith? It seems well first to consider what it has meant to others of whose lives it was a great part, so let us look at a few time-honored definitions and a few symbols by which faith has been visualized to the mind. Let us begin by looking at St. Paul's great definition of faith in the Eleventh Chapter of Hebrews. In the first part of it he declares that faith is the substance of things hoped for.

So this great man who had so much successful experience with faith deliberately and confidently calls it a form of substance, not the substance of what we see but the substance of what we hope for. So even that has substance. Indeed it does, for the potential as well as the actual is real. You will realize that better before you are through dealing with the question of faith.

You see, faith, hope, and love, are not unrelated things. As St. Paul hints in the closing words of the Thirteenth Chapter of First Corinthians, they are bound together in an almost unitary relationship.

Hope is the great projector. It builds bridges from the things that are to the things that might be. Then faith, the great realizer, works on the patterns hope has set till the unseen becomes the seen, till what was a hope has become a reality, and it is ready for love to take over and operate. Thus faith has given substance to a desire, a plan, a projected possibility. All this must be done and used in love, so there we have the great trio at work for us.

Hope projects a desire, then faith sees it as a reality. As long as we hold that picture in thought faith uses all kinds of unseen forces to build the realization, to give the plan its material manifestation.

In the Petrified Forests of the Southwest one actually sees tree trunks of stone, - the dried, solidified sediments of vari-colored minerals. These have been built up through long ages by mineral-laden water seeping into the spaces left by the decaying cells of the tree trunk, so at last a tree of agate or some other mineral substance has been formed in the exact pattern of the original tree. In some such way faith takes the patterns hope forms and turns them into substance.

So you see, the things we hope for should not be considered impossible. They may be quite intangible and seem quite impossible now, but faith has ways of manifesting them in material form. Nor is there any limit to what it can do. Remember how Jesus said that nothing should be impossible to it.

Why not now and then make out a bill of particulars? Write a list of your hopes, like a child writing a letter to Santa Claus. Look it over and cross out any you are not sure are good and right to ask for. Then, by prayer in faith, seek the rest, crossing out one by one those that are realized, till all have been achieved.

THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN:

We are now thinking of reaching into the realm of the unseen and seeing our prayerful desires built into reality through faith. But some do not believe in the existence of the unseen, while others do so only in a very uncertain and ineffective way. Still others demand proof. "Where is the evidence?", they ask.

Some children of the sense-world might think there is no evidence, but there is. One proof of the unseen is what it does. Cold is unseen, but winter is its evidence. Electricity is unseen, but the whirring motor is the proof of it. Electromagnetic vibrations are unseen, but the voice of the radio proves that they exist.

Faith proves the unseen in even more subtle ways. It reaches into the unseen and brings forth proofs of its existence in visible form by taking unseen hopes and turning them first into expectations and finally into tangible facts.

Think this over and see if you do not discover some surprising things in your own personal world and experience. See if you do not discover things in your life, things around you, things appearing on your horizon day by day, that have been literally produced from plans and patterns invisible to the eye. The world is full of them, and who can conceive any limit to them? How much proof do we need?

While faith is proving the unseen it is also proving itself. After a little experience these things should have become everyday facts to us. They should appear as definite and real as any of the common things we see and think we know so well.

By faith we know that back of created things must be a Creator, and that at the heart of things must be an intelligent personal Power that holds them together and keeps them in control.

By faith we know that one of the names of our Creator is Love, and that His relationship to us is that of a father. That being the case, we have free access to Him with our problems and needs, including the great problem of living itself, and can ask as we will, knowing that it is His wish that we should have all good things.

By faith we know that even as the beauties and wonders of the earth have materialized from energized thoughts of beauty, good, and perfection, so that creative process can go on and on as hope pictures it and faith makes it real.

By faith we know that we can carry this creative process into our own lives. We can let hope lay out the patterns, then we can let faith help us with the weaving. We can see any thing, person, or condition, in terms of God's perfection, and faith will work to make the image real.

All these things as they occur become evidences of the unseen, just as St. Paul said, for the unseen was actually the source of the material of which these very real things were built.

VICTORY:

In the first of his four letters appearing near the end of the New Testament, St. John gives faith another, and a sweeping, definition. Speaking in a time of great turmoil, persecution, and peril, when the Roman Empire and its pagan ways seemed to be dominating the world life, he denied any such domination with the declaration, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." That put a different face on the world unrest of that day and the world unrest of ours, when again materialism has gone as far as it can go.

This, then, is a definition of faith as an overcoming force. Power and authority were the only formulae Rome knew, and by them in her day she proposed to overcome the world, sweeping ruthlessly out of the way the followers of the Man who had openly taught that it would be the meek who would inherit the earth. The mistake of the Roman Empire was that it did not understand the Nazarene. It knew nothing about the faith on which He and His followers relied.

This facet of faith should have a very wonderful meaning for us in these times, for we are again in a period of force, conquest, and confusion, brought about by people who have taken no account of any such factor as faith in the development of the history of the world. This is a time when many factions of the race hope for victory over the others, never dreaming that when victory comes it will come through faith, and that it will be a victory for humanity and not for any part of it alone.

All this applies just as much in our personal, private world as it does in the world in general. We must win in our own worlds, whatever happens elsewhere. The example of many would be to try to win by force, or scheming, or taking advantage; but that is not the way to win. The counsel of many would be to go after what you want, and get it regardless of what you have to do to others in the process. That is not the way either. Too many have failed with it not to know.

"You must be realistic", they say; but the methods they use are not realistic, for they do not take all the facts into account. Faith is the most realistic of all forces to be used in accomplishing things.

In these days, people with the force idea like to develop what they call secret weapons and threaten the safety of others with them. Such things have their limitations. But you and all who understand the spiritual law have a secret weapon with more power in it than all the bombs ever made put together. Faith can win more than anything and everything else ever made, and it can do it quietly, and effectively. Faith has won more and greater decisive battles than force has ever done, and for more important causes.

It has been written that some trust in chariots and some in horses, but who are they and what has become of the causes for which they fought? It has also been written that causes are won not by might, nor by power, but by the spirit of Jehovah. That is, they are won by faith.

That is your secret. That is your formula for victory. Human conceptions

of might and power are inadequate and ineffective. If you rely on them they will fail you. Go straight to the Source of all power. Turn the force of the power given you on what you must overcome, and you will find that faith is the victory.

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FREEDOM:

Being victory, faith is also freedom. It does not merely open prison doors and strike off chains. Its work is more complete than that. It dissolves the forces and conditions of one kind and another that enslave us. The word "freedom" really means much more than we ordinarily think of when we use it, and all that it means is yours if you apply faith to the problem or problems of living.

If we could see the real selves of people rather than just their outward appearances we would in many cases be amazed at the way we let ourselves get all entangled in the cords of tension, fear, uncertainty, and false and misleading feelings of inferiority. These bonds cannot remain where faith is. Let it unbind you now and set you free.

Faith sets free from the limitations of sense. It lifts the curtain between the worlds; between the past, present, and future; between the possible and the so-called impossible. It is a key to all worlds, all ages, all things, and all conditions. It is a key to life and not just one little section of it.

Hear now a little parable: A certain man, lean of life and hungry of heart, a man who had lived his life hedged in by all kinds of limitations, came at last to stand before the gate to a beautiful place in which lay the fulfillments of all his dearest dreams. When he realized that this was true, his joy and anticipation knew no bounds. So long he had searched and waited to be set free from his poverty of body, mind, and spirit. Now the waiting days were over, and the time of freedom, peace and happiness was at hand.

Trembling with anticipation, he approached the gate and laid an eager hand upon it. But it did not yield. He pushed and shook the gate and rattled the lock, but all in vain. He could hardly believe the situation was true. It was harder to give it up now than if he had never found the gate at all. But give it up he must. Sadly he turned away and started retracing the long road by which he had come.

Arriving home too old and tired to make the journey again, he sought out the one who had encouraged him to go, and told his story of failure and disappointment. As his nervous hands searched his pockets he felt a key he had not known was there. "I wonder what kind of a key it is," he mused. "That", said his friend, "is the key to the gate you thought you could not open and from which you turned away."

This story is told of one imaginary person, but it is the story of many real ones. Each of us longs for a life of freedom from all that keeps our thinking

weak and small, and prevents our normal development, growth, and achievement. We all have the key to the kingdom of our happiness and the fulfillment of our life purposes, but that avails us nothing unless we realize that we have it and know how to use it.

We were never meant to live fettered lives. Surely it is little enough that we should use the means of deliverance we have.

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THE LEVER:

Have you ever seen a mountain or other large body of earth being moved? If so, it was probably being done with bulldozers and other heavy earth-moving machinery. But there is another and simpler mechanism that could do it if it could be properly placed - a lever. The wheel was one of man's great discoveries. The lever was another.

Every time a ship's displacement of water is estimated, or balloon gas is used, or a spiral water conveyer is used, or a lifting jack raises a heavy weight, we are indebted to Archimedes, a Greek mathematician, physicist, and inventor of more than 2,000 years ago.

We are also indebted to him for the idea of the lever, for a mind daring enough to realize its power. He said that if he only had somewhere to stand and place his lever he could move the earth, and he probably could have.

What the lever is in the world of material things, faith is in the world of spiritual things. The lever can operate only if one has a place to stand and a fulcrum or revolving point for the lever itself, but faith requires nothing but itself. You can operate it anywhere and any time.

You can use Faith to pry out weakness and open the way to the qualities of strength and ruggedness of purpose.

You can use it to pry out old prejudices and to move in a fair and well-balanced point of view in all things.

You can use it to pry out loneliness and excessive solitude and to bring into your life enough good friends to make your days glad.

You can use it to pry out confusion and disturbance of mind and to move in a condition of clearness and order.

You can use it to pry out frustration and conflict and to open the way to peace within and without.

You can use it to pry out old fears and to open the way to confidence and courage.

You can use it to pry out incompetence and failure and to open the way to skill and effectiveness.

You can use it to pry out old doubts of God, of right, of others, of yourself, and to open the way to unwavering belief.

You can use it to pry out old tendencies to give up without trying and to clear the way to open doors and inviting gates.

You can use it to pry out old conceptions of a world of gloom and despair and to open the way for you to see that it is really a world of hope and happiness.

You can use it to pry out hate and ill will and to open the way to a condition where for you it is a world of good will and friendliness.

You can use it to pry out old commitments to failure and to open the way to new commitments to success.

You can use it to pry out old dependence on ways that fail and to open the way to dependence on the spiritual forces that do not fail.

You can use it to pry out everything that makes life weak, puny, and ineffective, and to open the way to everything that makes it strong, capable, and sure.

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THE TOP RUNG OF KNOWLEDGE:

Let us now think of faith as the climax of the development of the inner life, the highest form of the light by which we see how to go.

The first thing that distinguishes a living organism from dead matter is sensation. Out of that grows movement and other elementary indications of life that has established some recognition of the world outside itself.

These elementary forms of sensation are only the suggestive beginnings of the full possession of complex sense organs making possible sight, touch, hearing, taste, smell, and the like. The maximum comes only with much time, use, and development, such as we have in the human species of today.

Beyond this world of sensation some never go. They recognize only what they can thus perceive, and that is not much. Their world is juvenile. The child or the animal knows the world of perception, perhaps even better. Most reality lies beyond the reach of the senses. They are but stepping stones to wider knowledge, or to lower rungs of the ladder of understanding.

Above them is the level of understanding or insight, where only the human may go, if he will. It takes the facts the senses perceive, and relates them. Two or more of them may mean far more in their relationship than they could alone. For

instance, chlorine is chlorine and sodium is sodium, but together they are salt.

The next rung is that of reason. It not only sees sense-discovered facts in their relationship but inquires what they mean in the total scheme of life and things. It bases assumptions on them and tests them to determine whether they are true. It builds thought-bridges from the known out in search of the unknown, and often finds it. Thus human understanding grows.

The next rung in the ladder is wisdom. It takes these facts sense has discovered and considers them both singly and in their relations to ask what they are good for, what their applications in life are, and what should be done about them. Thus they are applied to life, which is improved by them. One who thus builds truth into everyday living is called wise.

But this is not all. There is a process resting on top of all of these, - one which makes use of all the powers of understanding in a yet larger way. It knows facts, but goes far beyond them. It understands the sense world but uses it as an approach to realms independent of it. It understands things it does not see, hear, or touch. It reaches into realms beyond time and space and discovers things no other power can know, the chief of which is God.

No one is excluded or prevented from rising to this top rung of the ladder of understanding. From it you will perceive the divine, the eternal, the universal reaches of life, the right way to think and live, your own soul, the implications of your own existence. This is the level of understanding the others were made to reach. Its name is Faith.

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CONFIDENCE:

There is a simple, yet inclusive, definition of faith that gathers all the foregoing ones into a single word - confidence. That is what faith reduces to. Each of the descriptions and symbols of faith we have used ultimately amount to that. We cannot escape the fact that having faith in anything means having confidence in it.

Have you not observed that the friends in whom you have had confidence have been the best friends, the plans in which you have had confidence have worked out best, the powers in which you had confidence have served you best, and the beliefs in which you had confidence have proved most true? And have you not considered that it was at least partly your confidence that made it so?

The painter begins to be an artist the day that he begins to have confidence that his brush and colors will rightly depict the dream in his soul. The player begins to be a musician the day he begins to feel his mastery of his instrument. The inferior person begins to be a superior person the day he begins to find that he has mastered himself well enough to control and coordinate his powers and his qualities.

All this applies in one's relation to God. He begins to realize on that relationship and to draw on the divine resources of wisdom and power the day he begins really to have confidence that they exist and that they are available to him.

The first thing, then, is to believe tremendously in God. The second is to believe tremendously that God is able and willing to crown his life with all true happiness and good.

You cannot believe in God by having seen Him, for no one has ever done that or can. But you can see His handiwork. You can trace His power in history. You can believe the testimonies of the wise and good. You can credit the experiences others have had with the divine. You can open your life to the divine Presence and see and feel the results. You can assume God as the X in the equation of life and see if it figures out. Surely one cannot do these things without coming tremendously to believe in God.

The rest should be easy. If you believe tremendously in God, you must surely believe as tremendously in His power and willingness to care for you, help you, and guide you to what is best in life for you.

There is another step we must not fail to notice in passing. One must not only cherish these beliefs, but he must also have confidence enough in them to act upon them. We shall stress that more fully a little later.

Let us recall what happened one morning some days after the resurrection of Jesus. The disciples were on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, lamenting their loneliness since their Leader walked with them no more. Suddenly they saw Him coming toward them - walking on the water.

In a burst of faith Simon Peter started toward Him. Then his faith failed, and he began to sink and had to be rescued. That is what happens to us when we try and run out of faith.

Walk your sea of life in confidence. It will sustain you while your faith lasts. If you are sinking, pray that your faith may be increased, and stand with confidence again.

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AFFIRMATION

In confidence in God I walk safely anywhere and
succeed in any good thing I undertake.

